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ROY & DANN THOMAS WRITERS • MARK BAGLEY LAYOUTS • TONY DeZUNIGA INKER • JANICE CHIANG LETTERER • ANDY YANCHUS COLORIST • HOWARD MACKIE EDITOR • JIM SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF

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scanned by Toker The Kid

YOU KNOW I DO! BUT WE WON'T DO TEDDY OR LUCIAN MUCH GOOD UNLESS WE GET TO 'EM IN ONE PIECE, WILL WE?
LOOK, I GUESS YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING--BUT THIS IS STILL SO UNREAL TO ME...
I MEAN, I CAN'T GET MY MIND AROUND THE IDEA THAT IT WASN'T DR. LUCIAN BALLAD WE WERE WITH BACK IN NEW ORLEANS--BUT HIS EVIL TWIN BROTHER, TULLIUS.
IS THAT MORE INCREDIBLE, KEITH, THAN THE TRUTH ABOUT YOURSELF? THAT YOU CAN ENTER OTHER PEOPLE'S DREAMS, AND--
MARTINE--LOOK OUT!
THOSE PEOPLE--WALKING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD--!
DIDN'T SEE THEM AROUND THE BEND!
I CAN'T--
CUT YOUR WHEELS TO THE RIGHT--NOW!
I WON'T SAY MARTINE CAME CLOSE TO HITTING THAT KID WITH HIS PEASANT FAMILY...
...BUT I'D HATE TO HAVE TO LIVE ON THE AIR BETWEEN OUR RENTED JEEP AND HIS TENDER SKIN.
RENEGADE
SKREEOOOSH

FOR A SECOND, AFTER WE DITCH, I HAVE THESE MENTAL VISIONS OF THE WHOLE FAMILY COMING AT US WITH MACHETES. BUT INSTEAD...

THANK YOU FOR SWERVING TO AVOID HITTING LITTLE PIERROT, MISS!

UH... DON'T MENTION IT. ANY CHANCE YOU COULD HELP US OUT OF THIS MUD?

THEY'RE STRONG PEOPLE. HAVE TO BE, I GUESS, JUST TO SURVIVE IN AS TOUGH A PLACE AS HAITI.

MY SISTER AND HER HUSBAND WOULD THANK YOU, BUT THEY DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH, AS I DO.

JUST WISH WE HAD MORE ROOM, SO WE COULD-- UHNH!--GIVE YOU A LIFT! WHERE'RE YOU HEADED?

TO THE HUMFO OF ONE CALLED TULLIUS.

OUR BURRO IS LOADED WITH GIFTS FOR HIS PATRON LOAS.*

*SPIRITS-H.M.

IT IS SAID--THAT TONIGHT, TULLIUS WILL SLAY THE TWO-HEADED GOAT.

BUT-- PLEASE-- I HAVE SAID TOO MUCH!

MERCI FOR YOUR HELP. SEE YOU AROUND.

FARE-WELL, MY FRIENDS!

WELL, AT LEAST WE WEREN'T DELAYED TOO LONG.

WHAT'S WRONG, KEITH? DID THAT PEASANT SAY SOMETHING...?

THEY'RE HEADED FOR TULLIUS AND--

MARTINE, WHAT DID HE MEAN WHEN HE SAID-- TULLIUS IS GOING TO SLAUGHTER A TWO-HEADED GOAT TONIGHT?

THAT... IS WHAT VOODOOISTS WHISPER...

...WHEN THERE'S TO BE A HUMAN SACRIFICE!

HUMAN SACRIFICE!? YOU DON'T MEAN--
IN YOUR HEART, YOU'VE KNOWN IT SINCE WE TALKED IN NEW ORLEANS, KEITH. BUT THE TRUTH WAS TOO HORRIBLE TO ADMIT--EVEN TO YOURSELF.

MARTINE--THIS IS MY KID SISTER WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE--AND LUCIAN'S THE BEST FRIEND WE'VE GOT IN THE WORLD.
SHOULDN'T WE HAVE GOT HELP BACK IN PORT-AU-PRINCE? THE POLICE...
...ARE IMPOTENT, WHERE VOODOO IS CONCERNED.

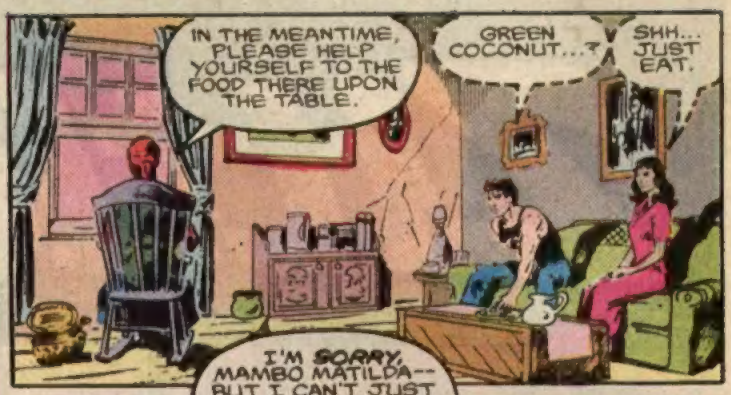
YET, THERE IS ONE WHO, PERHAPS, CAN HELP.
WH--? THIS ROAD'S EVEN RUTTIER THAN THE OTHER ONE.
WHERE'RE WE GOING? THAT CAN'T BE TULLIUS'S SPREAD UP AHEAD--CAN IT?

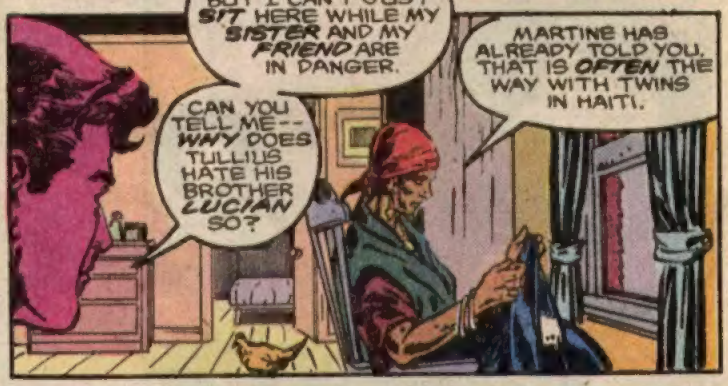
NO. IT IS THE HUMFO OF ONE WHOM EVEN TULLIUS FEARS AND RESPECTS, IN HIS WAY...THE MAMBO* MATILDA.
THE ONE WHO SENT LUCIAN THAT LETTER ABOUT HIS MOTHER DYING? THAT'S WHAT STARTED THIS WHOLE MESS!
NO, TULLIUS STARTED IT. MAMBO MATILDA WAS MERELY TRYING TO WARN LUCIAN.
*VOODOO PRIESTESS--

I AM HER DISCIPLE. SHE IS VERY POWERFUL, THOUGH NOT EVIL OR GREEDY LIKE TULLIUS.
ONCE, SHE SPENT THREE WHOLE DAYS AT THE BOTTOM OF A RIVER, TO GAIN SECRETS FROM THE GREAT LOA, DAMBALLAH.
YOU MEAN "OLD WHITE SNAKE"? SURE SHE DID.

MY GREETINGS TO YOU, MY DEAR MARTINE...
...AND TO YOU, KEITH REMSEN.

YOU MUST BOTH BE WEARY AND HUNGRY AFTER SO LONG AND HARD A JOURNEY.
PLEASE BE SEATED. I SHALL BE FINISHED WITH MY SEWING IN A FEW MOMENTS.

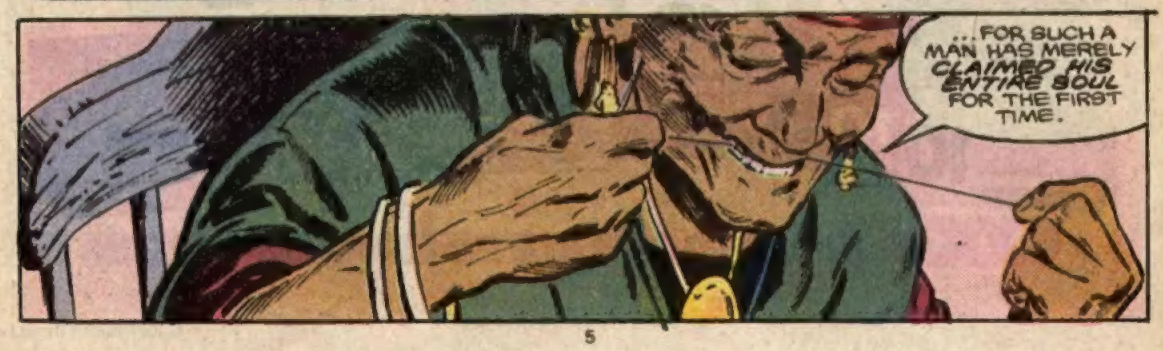

IN THE MEANTIME, PLEASE HELP YOURSELF TO THE FOOD THERE UPON THE TABLE.
GREEN COCONUT...?
SHH... JUST EAT.


I'M SORRY, MAMBO MATILDA-- BUT I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE WHILE MY SISTER AND MY FRIEND ARE IN DANGER.
CAN YOU TELL ME-- WHY DOES TULLIUS HATE HIS BROTHER LUCIAN SO?
MARTINE HAS ALREADY TOLD YOU, THAT IS OFTEN THE WAY WITH TWINS IN HAITI.

"WE BELIEVE TWINS SHARE BUT ONE SOUL.
"WHEN THEIR FATHER DIED, YEARS AGO, LUCIAN LEFT HAITI, WITH THE WHITE DR. SALINGER.

"THAT IS WHEN TULLIUS, WHO REMAINED, TOOK UP WITH THE ASSON--THE PRIMARY INSTRUMENT OF VOODOO.
"UNLIKE HIS PARENTS, TULIUS CHOSE TO SERVE WITH BOTH HANDS. THAT IS TO SAY... HE BECAME A USER OF BLACK MAGIC.

"AS LONG AS THEIR MOTHER LIVED, SHE HELD TULLIUS AND HIS HATRED FOR HIS BROTHER AT BAY.
"BUT SHE LIVES NO LONGER... AND IN HAITI, NO ONE TROUBLES A MAN WHO KILLS HIS TWIN...


...FOR SUCH A MAN HAS MERELY CLAIMED HIS ENTIRE SOUL FOR THE FIRST TIME.

AND THAT'S WHY YOU WROTE TO LUCIAN WHEN HIS MOTHER DIED?
ALSO WHY SHE SENT ME TO WARN YOU... FIRST IN YOUR DREAM, AND THEN IN PERSON.

BUT WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST--
WHAT'S THAT!?
BOOMbabaBOOM
THE CEREMONY IS BEGINNING.

THEN WHAT IN BLAZES ARE WE DOING SITTING HERE EATING GREEN COCONUT AND WATCHING AN OLD LADY WITH A CLAMSHELL NECKLACE DO HER KNITTING?
WE'VE GOT TO GET MOVING-- FOR LUCIAN'S SAKE--FOR TEDDY'S!
WHY'D THAT CRUMB TAKE TEDDY, ANYWAY? SHE COULDN'T DO HIM ANY HARM!
HE TOOK HER... BECAUSE HE FEARS YOU.
ME?

YOU--AND YOUR DREAM POWER.
THROUGH LUCIAN'S RECORDS, TULLIUS KNOWS ABOUT YOU--AND KNOWS TEDDY IS YOUR ANCHOR TO THE WAKING WORLD.
HE KIDNAPED HER BECAUSE HE FEARS WHAT YOU MIGHT OTHERWISE DO TO HIM WHILE HE SLEEPS.

WELL, HE BETTER START WORRYING ABOUT WHAT I'M GONNA DO TO HIM WHILE HE'S AWAKE!
LISTEN, IF YOU'RE NOT GOING, I AM! GIVE ME THE KEYS TO THE JEEP!
KEITH--WE MUST WAIT, UNTIL--

DO NOT BE AFRAID, KEITH REMSEN. WE WILL NOT HOLD YOU HERE.
BUT BEFORE YOU GO...

...YOU HAD BEST PUT THIS ON.
HOLY--!

IT'S--A NIGHTMASK COSTUME--JUST LIKE THE ONE I "WEAR" IN MY DREAM WALKS! BUT HOW--?
YOU SENT HER A SKETCH OF IT, DIDN'T YOU, MARTINE? THAT'S GOTTA BE THE ANSWER.
SHE SAW YOU AS NIGHTMASK WHEN I CAME TO YOU IN YOUR DREAMS. WHAT I SAW--: SHE SAW!
OF WHAT IMPORTANCE IS IT WHERE I SAW THEM?

PUT THEM ON, KEITH REMSEN. THEY WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH.
THEN, THE THREE OF US SHALL GO TO TULLIUS'S HUMFO--TOGETHER.

OKAY, MAMBO MATILDA... I'M AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE.

BOOMbabaBOOMbaB

I'VE BROUGHT YOU A VISITOR, LUCIAN.

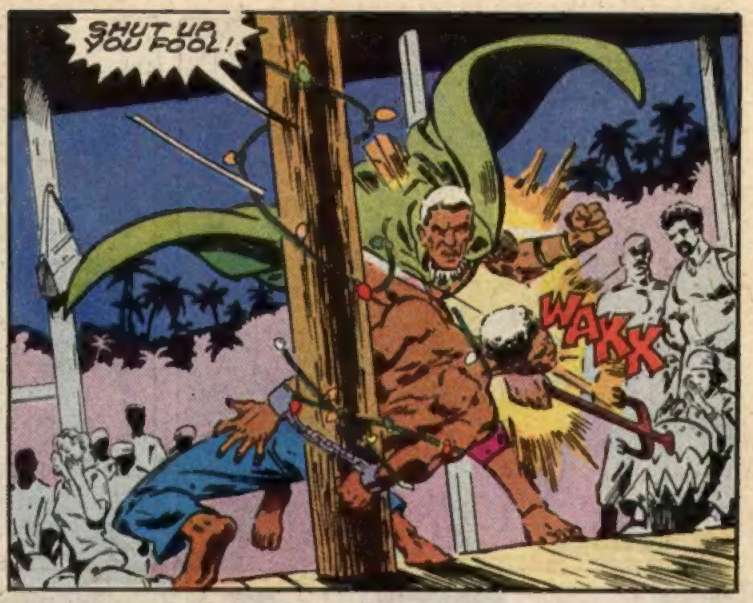
DEAR LORD-- NO--!

OH, LUCIAN-- WHAT'S HE DONE TO YOU? YOU'RE ALL BRUISED...
CAN'T YOU SAY HELLO TO TEDDY, DEAR BROTHER?
AFTER ALL, SHE'S COME ALL THE WAY TO NEW ORLEANS TO BE WITH YOU.
BOOMb
I... FIGURE I WAS A DEAD MAN, TULLIUS... THE MOMENT I WAS DRAGGED INTO YOUR HUMFO.
BUT WHY THE GIRL, TULLIUS? WHY TEDDY? SHE'S NO THREAT TO YOU.

DO WHATEVER YOUR DISEASED BRAIN FORCES YOU TO DO TO ME-- BUT LEAVE HER OUT OF IT.
--PLEASE--!

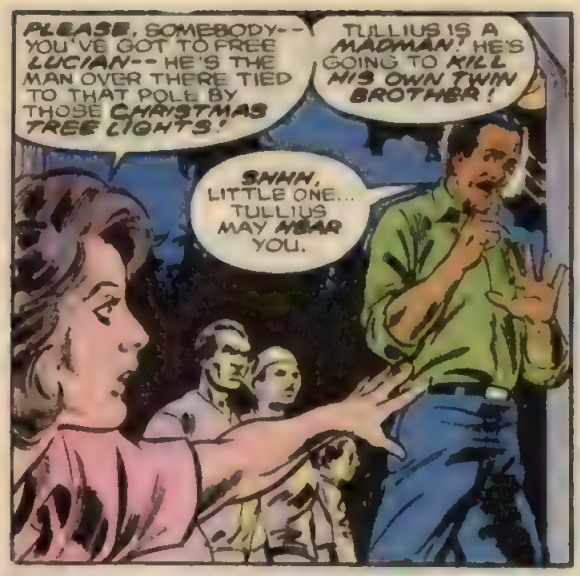
SORRY, LUCIAN, BUT I CAN'T OBLIGE. YOU SEE, I KNOW THE SECRET SHE AND HER BROTHER SHARE-- THAT SHE SERVES AS HIS ANCHOR WHEN HE ENTERS MEN'S DREAMS.
KEITH REMSEN WILL NEVER DARE TRY ENTERING MY DREAMS TO GET REVENGE FOR WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO YOU-- NOT WHILE I HAVE HER!

YOU... HAVEN'T CHANGED... HAVE YOU, TULLIUS?
YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE, KEITH.. AND, AS USUAL, YOU OVERESTIMATE YOURSELF!


SHUT UP, YOU FOOL!
WAKK

TONIGHT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, YOU WILL WITNESS MY POWER AS HUNGANX--
--AND I ASSURE YOU IT WILL BE THE LAST THING YOU WILL EVER SEE!
AND NOW, IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME, I MUST GREET THOSE WHO HAVE COME TO DO HOMAGE TO ME.
*VOODOO PRIEST (ALSO "PAPA-LOA")

WE HAVE BROUGHT YOU GIFTS, GREAT HUGAN--FOR THE LOA.*
BOOM
baba BOOMba
THE LOA ARE PLEASED. YOU MAY LEAVE THEM.
*SPIRITS.


PLEASE, SOMEBODY-- YOU'VE GOT TO FREE LUCIAN-- HE'S THE MAN OVER THERE TIED TO THAT POLE BY THOSE CHRYSTMAS TREE LIGHTS!
TULLIUS IS A MADMAN! HE'S GOING TO KILL HIS OWN TWIN BROTHER!
SHHH, LITTLE ONE... TULLIUS MAY HEAR YOU.

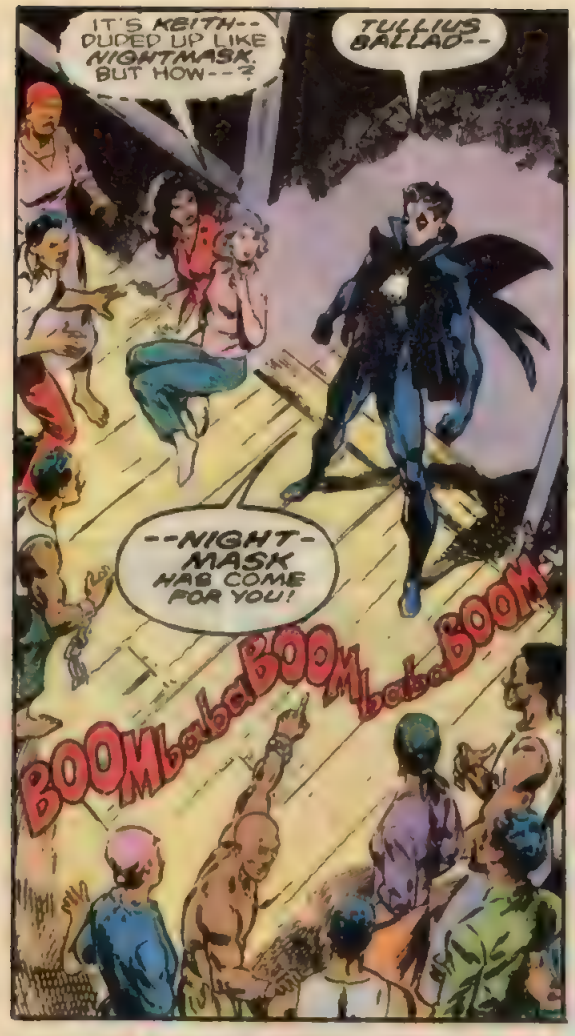
MOST OF THESE PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND ENGLISH I DO. BUT THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO TO HELP YOU.
TULLIUS IS VERY POWERFUL-- PROTECTED BY HIS LOAS. MANY HAVE DIED FROM HIS SORCERY BEFORE
BUT LUCIAN'S HIS BROTHER--!
AND THAT IS WHY HE MUST DIE NOW.. THE CEREMONY BEGINS HERE COME THE GUEDE-DANCERS...

BOOMbabaBOOMbabaBr

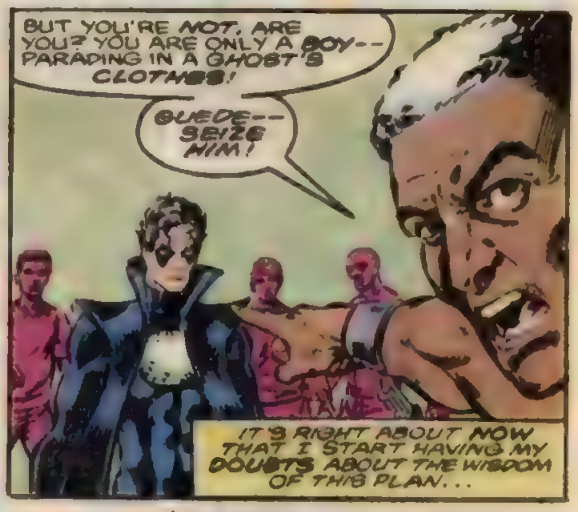
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! I'M GONNA GO CRAZY MYSELF! LUCIAN... KEITH.
I JUST WANNA GO HOME...!

AND PERHAPS YOU SHALL, TEDDY

MY NAME IS MARTINE. AND I AM NOT ALONE
OH MY G--
baBOOMb


IT'S KEITH-- DUDED UP LIKE NIGHTMASK. BUT HOW--?
TULLIUS BALLAD--
--NIGHT-MASK HAS COME FOR YOU!
BOOM babaBOOM babaBOOM

YOU!? BUT YOU ARE ONLY A CREATURE OF DREAM--
--A PHANTOM OF THE MIDNIGHT HOURS!


BUT YOU'RE NOT, ARE YOU? YOU ARE ONLY A BOY-- PARADING IN A GHOST'S CLOTHES!
GUEDE-- SEIZE HIM!
IT'S RIGHT ABOUT NOW THAT I START HAVING MY DOUBTS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF THIS PLAN...

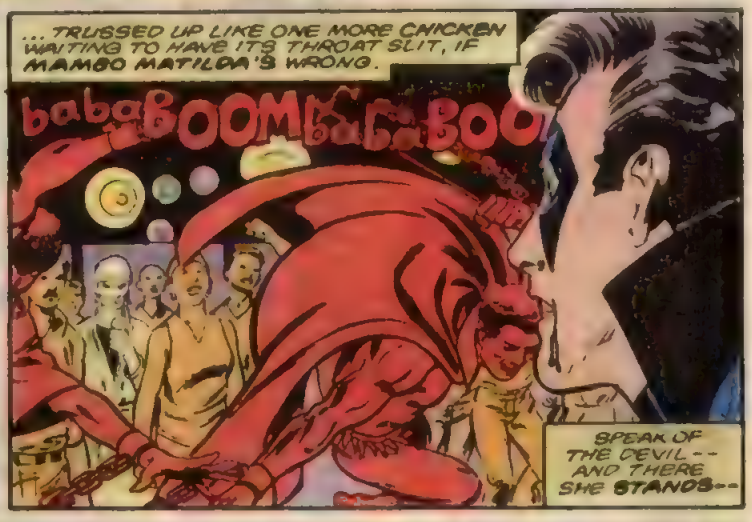
...BUT BY THEN, IT'S 'WAY TOO LATE.
EXCELLENT! TIE HIM NEXT TO THE ONE HE CAME TO FREE!

IT SEEMS THAT TONIGHT, WE WILL SACRIFICE THREE INSTEAD OF ONE.
DRUMMERS--!

OH GREAT! NOW KEITH'S A GONER, TOO -- AND THAT LUNATIC DOESN'T NEED ME FOR A HOSTAGE ANY MORE!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, TEDDY.

... THAT'S JUST WHAT WE KNEW WOULD HAPPEN
WATCH!

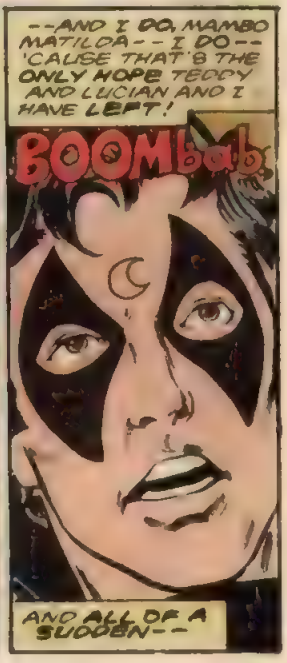
HOW DO I GET MYSELF INTO THESE THINGS...
BOOMbabaBoo

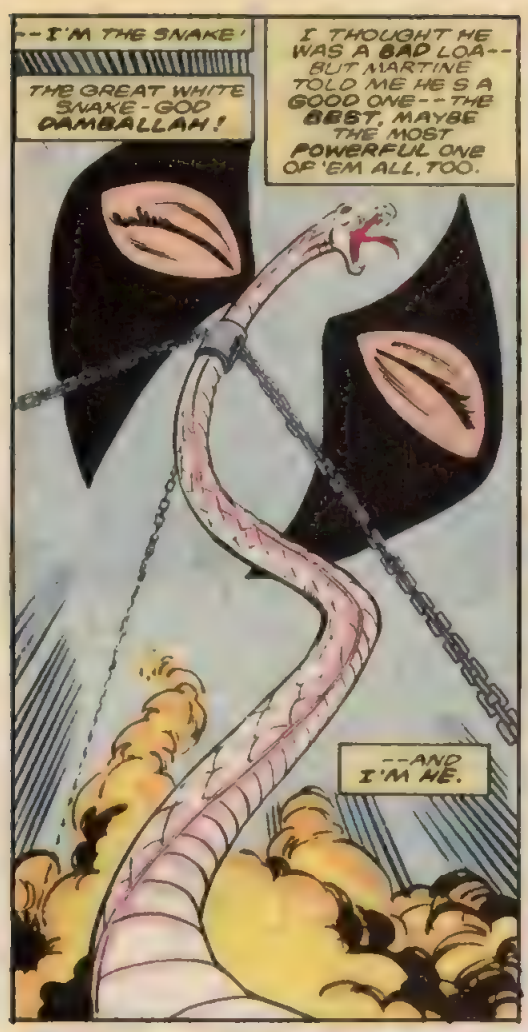

... TRUSSED UP LIKE ONE MORE CHICKEN WAITING TO HAVE ITS THROAT SLIT, IF MAMBO MATILDA'S WRONG.
babaBOOMbaBoo
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL -- AND THERE SHE STANDS--

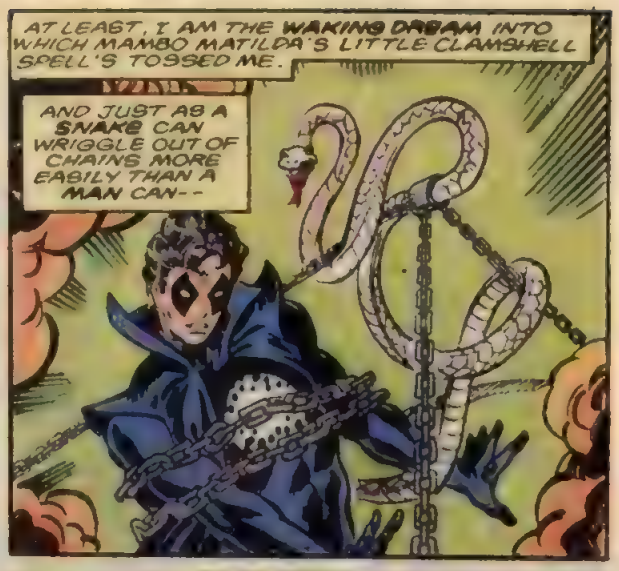
SOMETHING SHE TOLD ME ON THE FRANTIC DRIVE HERE--SOMETHING IMPORTANT, SHE SAID--
aBOOMba

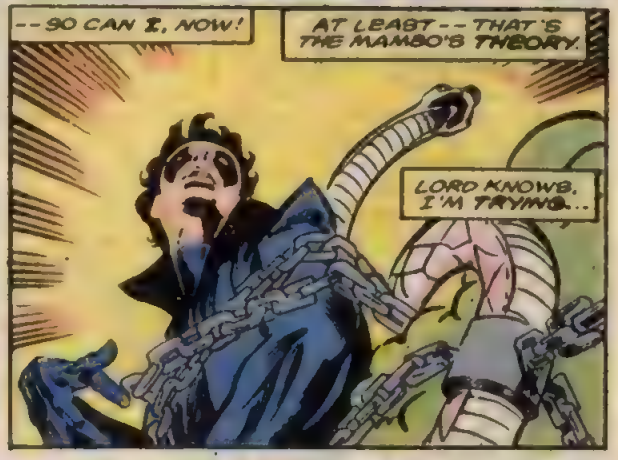
-- BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS, TO SAVE MY LIFE-- AND IT JUST MIGHT! WHAT WAS IT?
aBOOMbab

YES! NOW I REMEMBER! "TRUST THE SNAKE," SHE SAID-- TRUST THE SNAKE!"--
aBOOMbab


--AND I DO, MAMBO MATILDA-- I DO-- 'CAUSE THAT'S THE ONLY HOPE TEDDY AND LUCIAN AND I HAVE LEFT!
BOOMbab
AND ALL OF A SUDDEN--


--I'M THE SNAKE!
THE GREAT WHITE SNAKE-GOD DAMBALLAH!
I THOUGHT HE WAS A BAD LOA--BUT MARTINE TOLD ME HE'S A GOOD ONE--THE BEST. MAYBE THE MOST POWERFUL ONE OF 'EM ALL, TOO.
--AND I'M HE.


AT LEAST, I AM THE WAKING DREAM INTO WHICH MAMBO MATILDA'S LITTLE CLAMSHELL SPELL'S TOSSED ME.
AND JUST AS A SNAKE CAN WRIGGLE OUT OF CHAINS MORE EASILY THAN A MAN CAN--


--SO CAN I, NOW!
AT LEAST--THAT'S THE MAMBO'S THEORY.
LORD KNOWS. I'M TRYING...

...THOUGH ALL THE INCREASINGLY FRENZIED DANCERS AROUND ME SEE IS A CRAZY AMERICAN, WRESTLING WITH CHAINS HE COULD NEVER HOPE TO BREAK IN A MILLION YEARS!
BOOMbabaBOOMba
OOMB

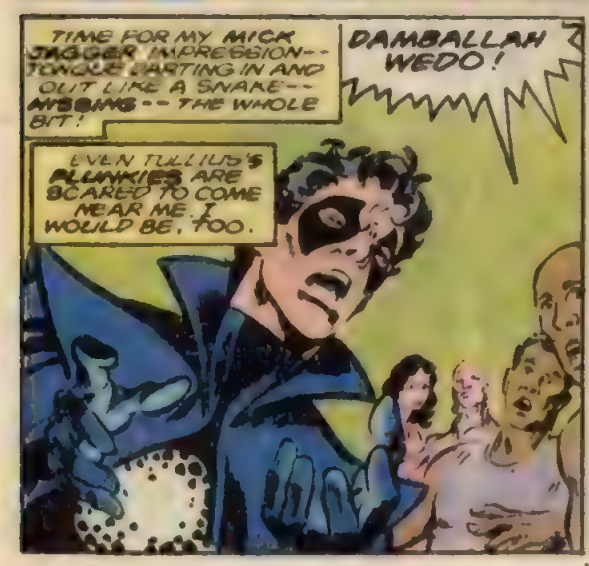
IT'S WORKING--IT'S WORKING, TEDDY!
H-HOW CAN YOU TELL? IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE KEITH'D TAKE OFF HALF HIS SKIN BEFORE HE COULD--
HOLY-COW--

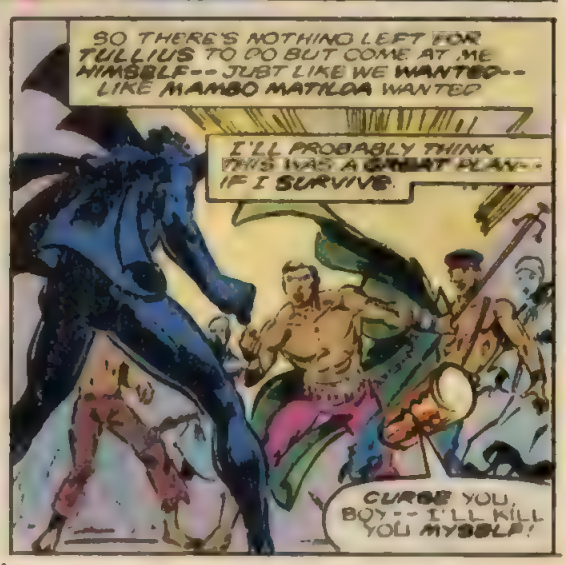
HE DID IT! HE'S FREE!

HOW COULD HE DO THAT, MARTINE? IT--IT WAS LIKE MAGIC!
THE TEST OF WILLS HAS ONLY BEGUN
TULLIUS IS PROTECTED BY THE CHAIN BEAST--KEITH BY DAMBALLAH. NOW--
--AND WE MUST PRAY THAT WILL BE ENOUGH!

HHSS SSS
THE MASKED ONE IS FREE!

HERE'S WHERE I GO INTO MY ACT--MAKING LIKE I'M POSSESSED BY DAMBALLAH.
NOT ME, THAT'S FOR SURE!
DAMBALLAH WEDO!
AND WHO'S TO SAY I'M NOT?
YEAH, I'M MAKING A HIT WITH THE CROWD, ALL RIGHT. THEY'RE EATING IT UP BUT TULLIUS--
SEIZE HIM ONCE AGAIN, MY GUEDE-DANCERS!


TIME FOR MY MICK JAGGER IMPRESSION--TONGUE DARTING IN AND OUT LIKE A SNAKE--AWSOME--THE WHOLE BIT!
DAMBALLAH WEDO!
EVEN TULLIUS'S FLUNKIES ARE SCARED TO COME NEAR ME. I WOULD BE, TOO.


SO THERE'S NOTHING LEFT FOR TULLIUS TO DO BUT COME AT ME HIMSELF--JUST LIKE WE WANTED--LIKE MAMBO MATILDA WANTED
I'LL PROBABLY THINK THIS WAS A GREAT PLAN--IF I SURVIVE.
CURSE YOU, BOY--I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF!

NOW IT BEGINS. MAMBO MATILDA WALKED ME THROUGH IT VERBALLY DURING THE WILD RIDE HERE -- SO I'D KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT
BUT COULD I REALLY BE READY FOR THIS?
FOR, AT THE SAME TIME, TULLIUS IS CHARGING ME LIKE A MADDENED RHINO, IN MY WAKING DREAM I'M STILL DAMBALLAH!
-- AND TULLIUS IS THE CHAIN BEAST -- ONE OF THE MOST POTENT EVIL SPIRITS IN THE WHOLE VOODOO WORLD!
WORSE THAN THAT - I'VE GOT MY EYES CLOSED --
-- AND I'VE GOT TO KEEP THEM THAT WAY, OR THE LINK WITH MAMBO MATILDA WILL BE BROKEN.

LUCIAN ONCE TOLD ME AN OLD RELIGIOUS MOTTO: "AS ABOVE, SO BELOW." WHATEVER HAPPENS IN HEAVEN OR THE HAPPY-HUNTING-GROUND OR WHEREVER IS DUPLICATED ON EARTH
ONLY IN THIS CASE, I DON'T KNOW IF I'M APING DAMBALLAH, OR HE'S APING ME.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE CHAIN-BEAST'S GOT THIS CHAIN--
--AND TULLIUS HAS GOT THIS CHAIN--
--AND IF EITHER OF THEM REALLY CONNECTS, I'M IN BIG TROUBLE!
I KNOW IT--
--AND SOMEHOW I THINK THE HAITIANS WATCHING KNOW IT, TOO.

BUT HEY, I'M NOT EXACTLY MR. 90-POUND WEAKLING MYSELF, AFTER ALL THOSE GYM SESSIONS WITH LITA MERCADO
AND I'M MAD-- GOOD AND MAD!
THIS CRUMB PLANNED TO KILL LUCIAN AND TEDDY--AND HE'S GONNA DO THAT OVER MY DEAD BODY!
RIGHT

WHEN MY HEAD STARTS TO CLEAR, TULLIUS IS GLARING DOWN AT ME-- AND I CAN FEEL HIS GRIP ON HIS FOLLOWERS TIGHTENING, LIKE A NOOSE ..

YOU CANNOT HARM TULLIUS, DREAM-CRAWLER! NOTHING CAN HARM TULLIUS!

Y-YOU HAVE TO KEEP THEM BELIEVING THAT... DON'T YOU, MAN?

YOU KNOW... THEY'D ALL DESERT YOU... IF THEY THOUGHT YOU COULD BE HURT WHILE IN YOUR POSSESSED STATE.

WELL, I'M NOT THROUGH YET...

BUT I AM--AND I KNOW IT--

--UNLESS SOMEBODY ELSE SUDDENLY GETS A BRIGHT IDEA

AND THEN I FEEL IT--TEDDY!

SHE'S IN MY MIND, LIKE SHE ALWAYS IS WHEN I'M NIGHT-MASKING AROUND IN SOMEBODY ELSE'S DREAMS!

SHE HEARD OUR LITTLE EXCHANGE ABOUT HOW TULLIUS HAS TO KEEP THEM THINKING HE'S INVULNERABLE--

--AND ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S REMINDED HER OF SOMETHING!

CAN'T TELL WHAT--I'M NO MIND-READER--

--BUT SOMETHING IN HER FLIGHT BAG THAT THE VOODOOISTS HUNG OVER HEAD

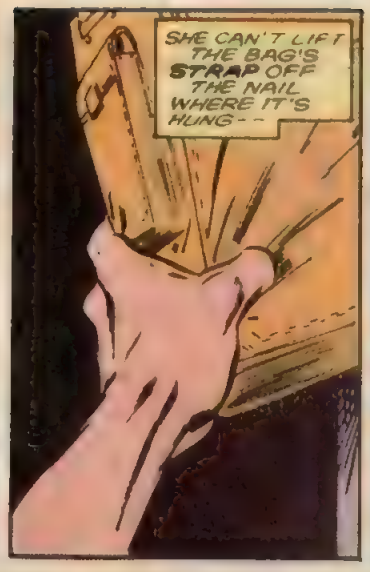
IF SHE COULD STAND, SHE COULD JUST REACH OUT AND GRAB IT

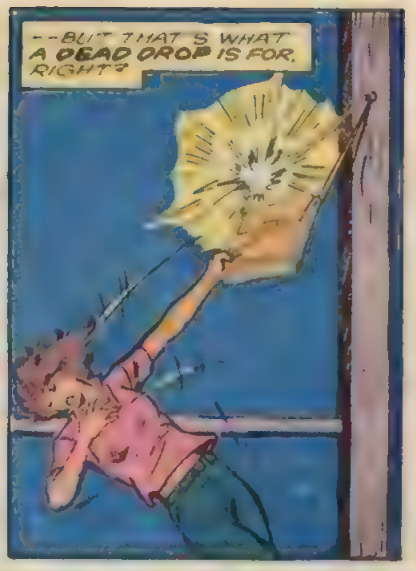
BUT SHE CAN'T STAND--NOT SINCE THE ACCIDENT THAT KILLED OUR PARENTS

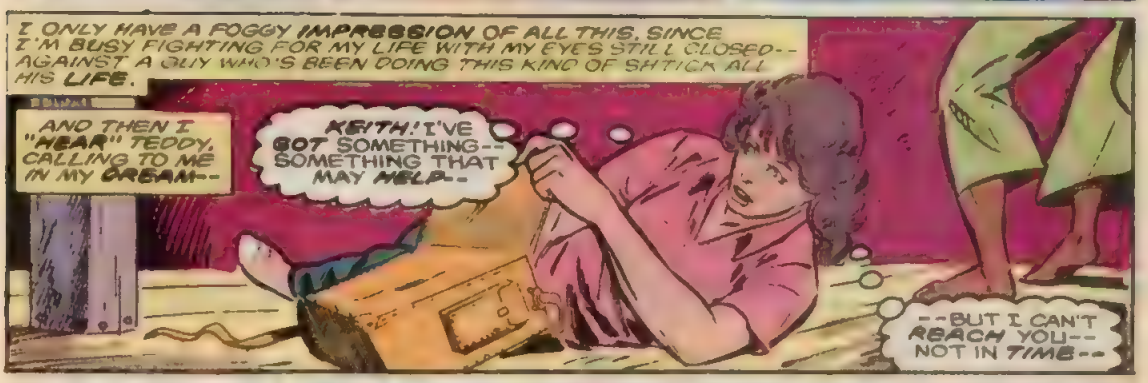
SHE'S TRAINED WITH LITA, TOO, THOUGH--

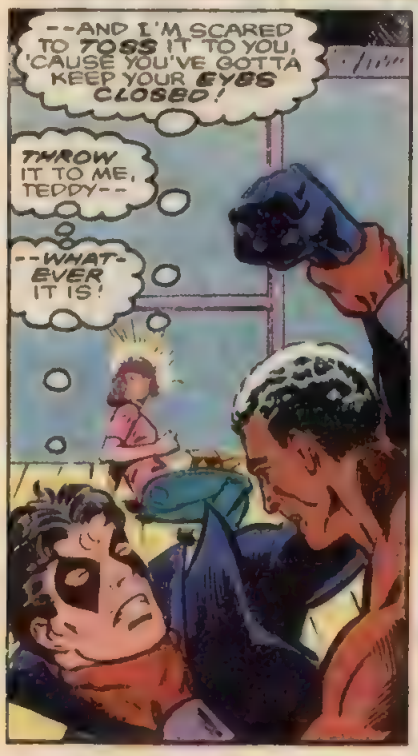
--AND HER ARMS ARE AS STRONG AS HER LEGS ARE WEAK--

--AND HER WILL'S STRONGER THAN EITHER OF THEM COULD EVER BE!


SHE CAN'T LIFT THE BAG'S STRAP OFF THE NAIL WHERE IT'S HUNG--


--BUT THAT'S WHAT A DEAD DROP IS FOR, RIGHT?


I ONLY HAVE A FOGGY IMPRESSION OF ALL THIS, SINCE I'M BUSY FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE WITH MY EYES STILL CLOSED--AGAINST A GUY WHO'S BEEN DOING THIS KIND OF SHTICK ALL HIS LIFE.
AND THEN I "HEAR" TEDDY, CALLING TO ME IN MY DREAM--
KEITH! I'VE GOT SOMETHING--SOMETHING THAT MAY HELP--
--BUT I CAN'T REACH YOU--NOT IN TIME--


--AND I'M SCARED TO TOSS IT TO YOU, 'CAUSE YOU'VE GOTTA KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED!
THROW IT TO ME, TEDDY--
--WHATEVER IT IS!

IF YOU DON'T-- I'M AS GOOD AS DEAD!
NO-- YOU CAN'T BE DEAD--

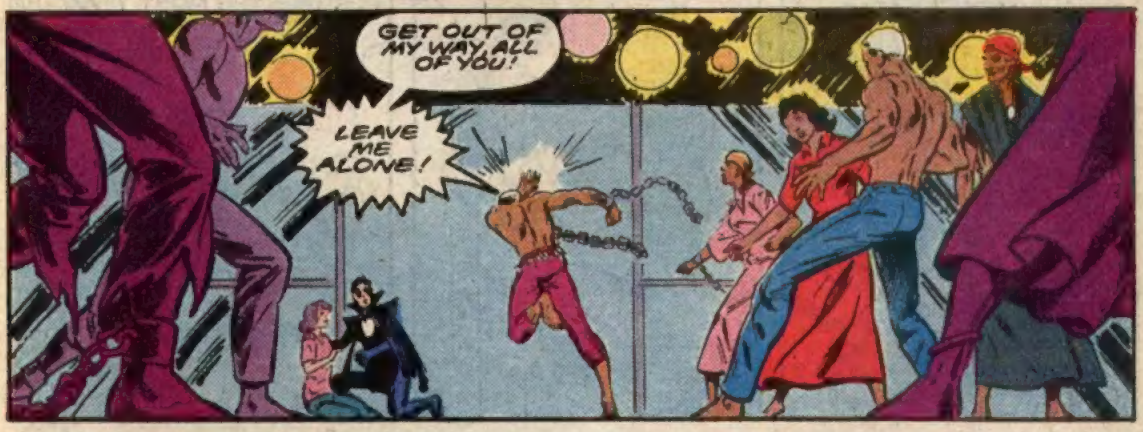
I WON'T LET YOU BE DEAD!
HERB, KEITH-- CATCH!

DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS I'M STRAINING TO REACH-- BUT IF TEDDY WANTS ME TO HAVE IT, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
THEN I SEE WHAT IT IS--
--THAT BOTTLE OF MAGNOLIA PERFUME SHE BOUGHT IN THE FRENCH QUARTER.
"AS BELOW, SO ABOVE!" DAMBALLAH'S GIVING IT TO THE CHAIN-BEAST, ALL RIGHT--A FACE-FUL OF VENOM--
--BUT IT'S KEITH ROMSEN CALLING THE SHOTS, WITH A PERFUME BOTTLE ATOMIZER!
TULLIUS'S CRY OF PAIN FILLS THE HUMFO-- MINGLED WITH THE CHAIN-BEAST'S ROAR, SO LOUD I KNOW THE OTHERS HAVE HEARD IT, TOO.
YARRRGG
THAT'S PROBABLY WHY THEY STAND AROUND LIKE A MURAL, WHILE TULLIUS MOANS AND GROANS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM--
--AND WHILE I FINALLY OPEN MY EYES AND BABE OVER TO LUCIAN.
SOON AS MARTINE AND I GET YOU OUT OF THIS, GET READY TO MAKE A DEAL FOR IT!
THAT'S WHEN MAMBO MATILDA MAKES HER MOVE. THE PEOPLE KNOW HER--AND THEY LISTEN WHEN SHE TALKS.
THE LOA HAVE DESERTED THIS EVIL HUNSAN-- THIS MAN WHO SERVES WITH BOTH HANDS!

HE IS HUNGAN NO MORE!

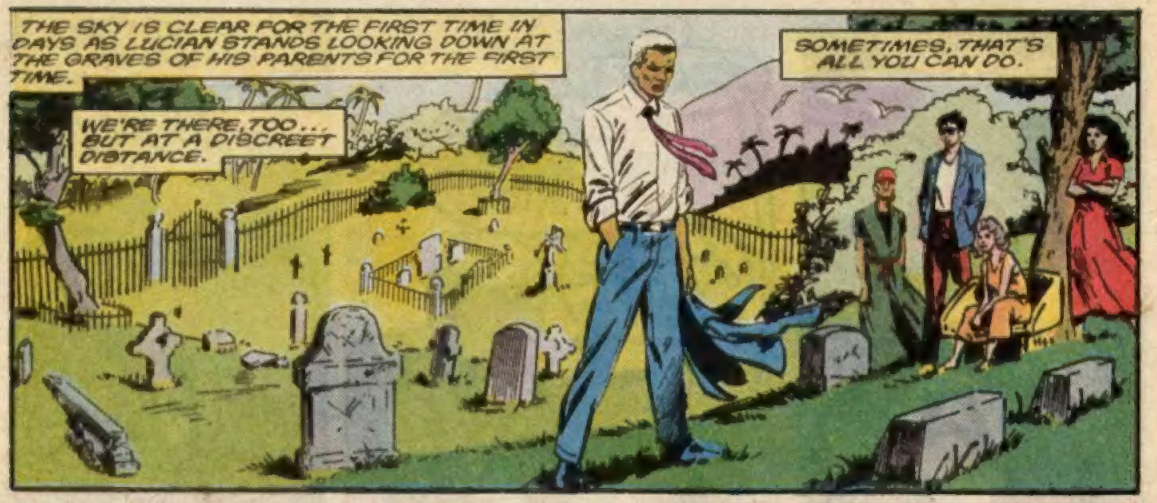
TULLIUS--I--
GET AWAY FROM ME!
BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY, DON'T YOU SEE? WE DON'T HAVE TO HATE EACH OTHER.
I NEVER HATED YOU--ONLY THE EVIL YOU DID! CAN'T WE--?

BUT I HATE YOU--AND I SHALL, UNTIL THE DAY I DIE!
TULLIUS--YOUR FACE--!


GET OUT OF MY WAY, ALL OF YOU!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

LUCIAN--MAMBO MATILDA--HE'S GETTING AWAY!
WE'VE GOT TO CATCH HIM, OR HE'LL START IT ALL OVER AGAIN!

NO, KEITH REMSEN, THE PEOPLE SAW HIS FACE. THEY SAW HOW IT HAD TURNED RED--BLOTCHY--ILL! THAT COULD NOT HAPPEN TO A TRUE HUNGAN WHILE HE WAS POSSESSED BY THE LOA.
THEY WILL NOT FOLLOW HIM AGAIN. THE POLICE WILL GET HIM NOW. EVEN THEY WILL NOT FEAR HIM.
THEN--THE VOODOO PRIEST WAS BEATEN BY A--AN ALLERGIC RASH?!
AND DAMBALLAH, KEITH.
YES...AND DAMBALLAH...


THE SKY IS CLEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DAYS AS LUCIAN STANDS LOOKING DOWN AT THE GRAVES OF HIS PARENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME.
WE'RE THERE, TOO... BUT AT A DISCREET DISTANCE.
SOMETIMES, THAT'S ALL YOU CAN DO.

OR IS IT?
MAMBO MATILDA, WHAT IF I WERE TO ASK YOU--IF IT'S POSSIBLE YOU COULD HEAL MY SISTER SOMEHOW?
HER LEGS WERE CRUSHED IN THIS EXPLOSION, SEE, AND--
IF YOU WERE TO ASK ME THAT, KEITH...

...I WOULD HAVE TO SAY THAT I COULD NOT. TEDDY IS NOT A BELIEVER.
AND THEN I WOULD TELL YOU BOTH ABOUT... LEGBA.
WHO'S LEGBA?

HE IS THE SPIRIT WHO GUARDS ALL CROSS-ROADS AND ENTRANCES, AND MUST BE CALLED ON FIRST TO ACT AS THE PORTAL BETWEEN MORTALS AND LOA.
LEGBA, TOO, IS A CRIPPLE... YET HE IS PERHAPS THE MOST POWERFUL LOA OF ALL.
AND IN HER OWN WAY, TEDDY, TOO, IS POWERFUL.

I UNDERSTAND, MAMBO MATILDA. WE'VE ALL GOT TO LIVE WITH OUR HANDICAPS... OUR LIMITATIONS... OUR SORROWS.

I MUST LEARN TO LIVE WITH MY INJURED LEGS...
...JUST AS LUCIAN MUST CARRY ON WITHOUT THE PARENTS HE LOVED, YET LEFT BEHIND HIM.
...A SENSE OF LOSS...!
MAYBE, IN THE LONG RUN, THAT'S THE ONE THING ALL HUMANS SHARE...
·FIN·

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universe news

ITEM: When the Marvel Universe was still aborning some twenty-six years ago, not all of its original creations immediately grabbed hold of the public fancy. The astonishing Ant-Man and the Human Torch lost their solo strips within a few years, and the incredible Hulk was cancelled after a mere *six issues* (only to return several years later as a co-feature). Now history is repeating itself in Marvel's New Universe. Four of the eight original New Universe titles have failed to catch on with a big enough segment of the buying public to warrant their continuation at this time. Those books which are being cancelled with the issues on sale this month are . . . MERC, NIGHTMASK, KICKERS INC., and CODENAME: SPITFIRE. While we've tried to provide some sense of resolution to the final issues of these titles, you have not seen the last of these books' characters (with one exception, which shall be apparent in the last issue of the title). Expect the unfortunate few who have lost their magazines to appear from time to time in the remaining New Universe titles, as well as certain *new* New Universe titles now in the planning stages. That's right, Marvel has not wavered in its commitment to its bold New Universe. We are simply retrenching, taking stock of what you, the true editors of our books, have told us about the merits and failings of our line, and we're coming up with new ways to make the New Universe the place to find the kind of stories you can't read anywhere else. To help us accomplish this, we've placed all of the New Universe titles under the auspices of *one editor*, a man who deserves an item all to himself. So, without further ado . . .

ITEM: Effective this very month, humble *Howard Mackie*, former managing editor for special publications, will take the editorial helm of all the New Universe titles — namely, D.P. 7, PSI-FORCE, JUSTICE, and STAR BRAND. Consolidating all of the books under a single editor's auspices will help coordinate the books' storylines so that the saga of the New Universe can unfold like never before. Howard, once known as the world's most mysterious assistant editor, approaches the task with the unbridled enthusiasm he is known for, and promises that the New Universe: Year Two will blow the socks off everyone's expectations (that is, if your expectations wear socks!). We'll profile Howard in this space next month!

ITEM: The entries are still pouring in on our New Universe slogan contest, and we're nowhere near sorting through the stack and determining our favorite. So in the meantime, here are more of your candidates for Official Sloganhood:

"Ours is the New Universe"
—Mike D'Ascenza, Toronto, Canada

"New way" "I new it!"
—Kevin Brittain, Haworth, OK

"One with the New Universe!"
—Robbie Rinto, Minerva, OH

"New News is Good News"
—Lowel Davison, Easthampton, MA

"New Universe: Get Real"
—Richard Horsman, Pittsburgh, PA

"I saw the White Event"
—Beth Hlabse, Richmond Heights, OH

"It's only the beginning"
—Mike Kamper, Western Springs, IL

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

If the New Universe takes place in "real time," how come a month does not pass between issues of D.P. 7?

"My understanding of the real time aspect of the New Universe books is that a year passes in the comic for every year that passes in real life, not that there is a month in between every issue. By about the end of the first year of D.P. 7's publication, a year has indeed passed for the characters (actually by the end of #13). I felt that crucial things were happening within the first few weeks of the Displaced Paranormals' escape from the Clinic that I did not want to gloss over, so I covered that period in depth. I had to allow several month-long time gaps to make up for that at the end of the first year."

—Mark Gruenwald, D.P. 7 writer

"New for You"
—Sean O'Reilly, Hudson, OH

"Unleash the Universe"
—Bert Gall, Griffin, GA

"Travel through the New Universe"
—Emiliano Amaro, Bronx, NY

"Until the next White Event"
Phill Barnes, Orlando, FL

"New Times, New Needs: New Universe"
—Scott Odell, no address on entry.

"Marvelously real"
—Nettie B. Hayden, Pelham, AL

"I've Got New Umania"
—Randy Ross, Port McNeill, BC, Canada

"May the New Universe Never Grow Old"
—Ernie Wiegand, Alberta, Canada

"The New Universe: Feel it around you"
—Amy L. Watts, East Peoria, IL

"The newest expansion of your imagination"
—Eric Phillips, Canastota, NY

"The New Choice"
—Anthony Sowinski, Maspeth, NY

"The New Universe is My Universe"
—Tommy Spell, Jackson, MS

"Light my Universe"
—Phil McClellin, Cald, ID

"New Rules!"
—Truitt Johnson, Clenco, MN

"A New Universe for New People"
—Brian Goodyear, Ontario, Canada

•NEW UNIVERSE CHECKLIST•

- ☐ **NIGHT MASK #12**—The end of Voodoo!
- ☐ **PSI FORCE #12**—Stasi's faith-healing power brings her in contact with a religious cult!
- ☐ **KICKERS, INC. #12**—The Kickers challenge a Canadian Hockey team!
- ☐ **MERC #12**—In a training camp for Afghan Freedom Fighters!
- ☐ **D.P. 7 #12**—Showdown at the Clinic with the ultimate Paranormal!
- ☐ **JUSTICE #12**—There is evil in this world. And now, there is Justice!
- ☐ **STAR BRAND ANNUAL #1**—Is the power of the Star Brand too much for Ken Connell to handle? It could spell death for someone he loves!
- ☐ **CODENAME: SPITFIRE #13**—Jenny goes into action — alone!
- ☐ **PSI FORCE ANNUAL #1**—Psi Force loses a member — and gains a new one! Also, find out what all the team members experienced on the day they gained their powers!